

## Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-05 EUR-06 NEA-05 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01

DRC-01 RSC-01 /036 W

----- 041124

R 081030Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 879

INFO USINT ALGIERS

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0029

CAIRO ALSO FOR CODEL

CODEL JOHNSTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP

SUBJ: CODEL JOHNSTON VISIT TO TRIPOLI

REF: STATE 248452

1. SUMMARY: SENATOR JOHNSTON'S VISIT WAS WELL COVERED BY LARG MEDIA. LATTER MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, TRIPOLI HAD NO HOPES VISIT WOULD IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH U.S. SENATOR WAS RECEIVED CORDIALLY AND CORRECTLY. DURING TALKS HE SOUGHT FRIENDLY GIVE AND TAKE WITHOUT CONCEDED GROUND, BUT HEARD ONLY POLEMICS. HIS REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH RCC CHAIRMAN QADHAFI SEEMED POSSIBILITY BUT DID NOT MATERIALIZE. ON POSITIVE SIDE THERE WAS LIMITED, BUT USEFUL CONTACT BETWEEN US. LIBYAN PUBLIC WAS AWARE OF U.S. WILLINGNESS TO HAVE HIGH LEVEL CONTACT, AND LIBYAN OFFICIALS UNDERSTOOD  
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OUR READINESS FOR DIALOGUE. END SUMMARY.

2. SENATOR J. BENNETT JOHNSTON'S VISIT TO TRIPOLI

JAN 6-7 WAS FIRST CODEL TO COME HERE IN PAST FEW YEARS. HE WAS RECEIVED CORRECTLY AND CORDIALLY BY LIBYAN GOVT WHICH HAD DESIGNATED ARAB SOCIALIST UNION AS SENATOR'S OFFICIAL HOST. VISIT WAS GIVEN PUBLIC PROMINENCE IN LARG-CONTROLLED RADIO, TV AND PRESS.

3. REGIME WENT TO SOME LENGTHS IN ADVANCE MEDIA COVERAGE AND DURING SENATOR'S TALK WITH ASU OFFICIALS TO EMPHASIZE IT HAD NO RPT NO HOPE VISIT COULD BRING VIEWS OF LARG AND USG CLOSER TOGETHER BECAUSE "U.S. LEADERSHIP IS UNDER INFLUENCE OF WORLD ZIONISM, IS BIASED IN FAVOR OF ENEMY," ETC. LIBYANS APPEARED TO HAVE NO PROBLEMS ABOUT VISIT TAKING PLACE. THEY WERE RELAXED, BUT WHILE SENATOR JOHNSTON AIMED AT A DIALOGUE, HIS PRINCIPAL INTERLOCUTOR, ASU CHIEF OF ARAB AFFAIRS AHMAD SHAHATTI, WAS INTERESTED ONLY IN STATING LARG'S ACUTELY DISTORTED VIEW OF U.S. ROLE IN LIBYA AND ARAB AREA.

4. PROGRAM WAS ONLY FINALIZED BY ASU FEW HOURS BEFORE SENATOR'S ARRIVAL. AT NINE IN EVENING WE WENT TO ASU HEADQUARTERS IN FORMER ROYAL PALACE FOR EXCHANGE OF VIEWS IN ONE OF SPLENDID ROOMS WHERE KING USED TO HOLD CREDENTIALS CEREMONIES. PRESENT ON LIBYAN SIDE, IN ADDITION TO SHAHATTI (FORMERLY IN DIPLOMATIC SERVICE), WAS HIGHLY CAPABLE AUG TRAINED PETMIN UNDERSECRETARY OMAR MUNTASSIR, MOFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR NAJIB SHAYBANI AND THREE OTHER ASU OFFICIALS.

5. SENATOR TRIED ALL EVENING TO OPEN UP THE DISCUSSION AS IT PROGRESSED, BUT SPOKESMAN SHAHATTI REFUSED TO DEPART FROM FAMILIAR POLEMICAL GROUND. UNTIL U.S. RECOGNIZED "RIGHT AND TRUTH" IN PROBLEMS OF OIL MONOPOLIES, SIXTH FLEET, ARAB MONARCHIES, AND UNTIL PALESTINE WAS RETURNED TO ITS RIGHTFUL OWNERS, HE SAID, LARG AND USG COULD NOT REALLY TALK ABOUT SHARED COMMON INTERESTS.

6. SENATOR JOHNSTON MAINTAINED FRIENDLY APPROACH WITHOUT CONCEDED GROUND. HE EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR MEETING WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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RCC CHAIRMAN QADHAFI. IN VIEW OF QUITE EXTENSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE FOR VISIT, AND AFTER SHAHATTI'S POLITE TESTING AND HAZING, WE HAD IMPRESSION APPOINTMENT WITH QADHAFI WAS POSSIBILITY. AT MIDNIGHT WE WERE TAKEN TO SUPPER AT WADAN HOTEL WHERE THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF OIL WITH MUNTASSIR. AT END OF SESSION WE WERE TOLD ASU WOULD PHONE NEXT MORNING IF FURTHER TALKS WERE ARRANGED.

7. FOLLOWING DAY ASU REP CAME TO EMBASSY TO TELL US QADHAFI WAS OUT OF TOWN AND APPOINTMENT WITH SENATOR WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. THERE HAS BEEN NO EVIDENCE OF QADHAFI IN TRIPOLI FOR PAST WEEK. HE DID NOT MEET UGANDA PRESIDENT AMIN WHO ARRIVED AT AIRPORT SHORTLY AFTER SENATOR DEPARTED.

8. SENATOR AND OURSELVES WERE DISAPPOINTED, BUT VISIT HAD POSITIVE RESULTS. THERE WAS LIMITED, BUT USEFUL CONTACT BETWEEN US. LIBYAN PUBLIC WAS AWARE OF U.S. WILLINGNESS TO HAVE HIGH LEVEL CONTACT, AND LIBYAN OFFICIALS UNDERSTOOD OUR READINESS FOR DIALOGUE.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** kelleyw0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
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